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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 001531

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CAR (BENT) AND WHA/PPC (PUCCETTI)
DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP (OWEN) AND (ETERNO)
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD AND J7

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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [OPRC](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [JM](#) [TIP](#)

SUBJECT: OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER DRIVING JAMAICA'S
ANTI-TIP EFFORTS

REF: A. STATE 097853

[1](#)B. KINGSTON 001444

[1](#)C. COWGER/BENT EMAIL 6/15/05

Summary

[1](#)1. (U) Since the June 3 release of the 2005 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report (Ref A), the GOJ has not engaged Post on the issue, nor has there been any official reaction to the Tier 3 Action Plan delivered to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) on June 2. However, following a week of sensational media coverage (Ref B) that reported (feigned) surprise and disbelief on the part of many GOJ officials, there are early signs that trafficking has been made a priority and that steps are being taken locally to combat TIP. End Summary.

New GOJ TIP Coordinator

[1](#)2. (SBU) During a previously scheduled meeting at the Ministry of National Security (MNS) on June 14, Poloff encountered Karl Hamilton of the Security, Intelligence, and Operations Division. Hamilton was named in an April 14, 2005 letter from the GOJ as "the focal point for issues relating to TIP," but was subsequently out of the office for one month preceding the June 3 publication of the 2005 TIP Report. Hamilton reported that, due to the timing of his recent vacation, his supervisor, Woodrow Smith, has taken over the lead role on TIP within MNS. Hamilton further stated, "We do see a problem. The report is good," adding that TIP in Jamaica has not been addressed to date because the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) lacks resources and does not understand the issue. He noted that TIP is currently a hot topic for the GOJ and that an "internal committee" is working on it. Poloff responded that Post looks forward to working with the GOJ on this issue.

Prime Minister's Office Leading the Way

[1](#)3. (SBU) In a follow-up telephone conversation with Poloff on June 15, Hamilton elaborated that, despite Smith's role in the process, it is the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) that are currently leading the GOJ's efforts on TIP. He explained that, thanks to the 2005 TIP Report, the GOJ has realized the broad scope and serious implications of human trafficking in Jamaica, and has escalated the issue internally. Poloff again expressed Post's willingness to work together with the GOJ on TIP, urging immediate action in consideration of the August 1 deadline and the July 13-16 visit by Department TIP representatives. Poloff pointed out that the GOJ has not communicated with Post on TIP since the release of the Report almost two weeks ago, and that it is important for Post to be kept apprised of GOJ anti-TIP efforts in order to report progress to Washington. Hamilton said that OPM and MFAFT were driving the issue, and that they would contact Post. He added that "most of the Jamaican public seems to be on your side," based on recent media coverage of the issue.

Positive Developments for Local Children

[1](#)4. (U) Extensive media coverage of the TIP Report, and the reporting of several TIP-related issues in major news outlets in recent weeks appear to indicate that the GOJ is responding seriously to the issue (Ref B). On June 2, the "Jamaica Observer" daily newspaper included an article by the GOJ-run Jamaica Information Service titled "Report child abuse or face prosecution." In some cases, media exposure of the issue may be pressuring the GOJ to take action. On June 16,

"The Gleaner" daily newspaper reported that one of four caregivers accused of sexually abusing children in a state-run children's home was charged in court, more than two years after the police reported their findings in the case to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). While neither case qualifies as trafficking in persons, both represent heightened government interest in protecting the rights of children.

Kingston Mayor Plans Massage Parlor Raids

15. (U) The Gleaner also reported on June 16 that the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC) intended to shut down "more than 200 illegal massage parlors" across the capital, in cooperation with the Public Health Department and the JCF. The three agencies plan to meet the week of June 20 to plan the operation against the unlicensed businesses, which Mayor of Kingston Desmond McKenzie implied also operate as brothels. McKenzie publicly credited the 2005 TIP Report with "focusing attention on an issue that the KSAC has been grappling with for over two years." Winston Bowen, Director of Programs at the Child Development Agency, commented to Poloff that his agency is prepared to assist in the action to ensure that any underage workers discovered in the raids are adequately protected.

GOJ Embracing NGOs and IOs on TIP?

16. (U) On June 13, Poloff learned from Betty-Ann Blaine, Director of People's Action for Community Transformation (PACT), a local NGO funded by USAID, that Jamaican immigration officers had on that day participated in a training session on trafficking issues at the request of the Immigration Department. Similarly, on June 15, Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative, explained to Poloff that his organization is working with the GOJ to train service providers on the contents of the Child Care and Protection Act.

Post Forms TIP Working Group

17. In order to coordinate Post's efforts to address TIP in Jamaica, an internal Working Group has been formed that includes representatives from USAID, Pol/Econ, Public Affairs, Narcotics Affairs, and the Military Liaison Office, whose programs could be seriously affected by Tier 3 sanctions. The working group is mapping out a strategy for collaborating with the GOJ to achieve goals suggested in the Tier 3 Action Plan, and will seek to integrate anti-TIP activities into the planning of all relevant USG agencies at Post. The Working Group will also brief, at their request, local representatives of international financial institutions whose programs may be subject to sanctions.

Comment

18. (SBU) Post is concerned at the lack of communication from the GOJ in the two weeks since the release of the TIP Report and delivery to MFAFT of the Tier 3 Action Plan. This may in some measure be attributable to a determination by some of our GOJ interlocutors not to be seen as "answering to instructions from Washington." With the clock running, we are left to inform ourselves largely through media reports, and have little idea at this point of the GOJ's specific plans to avoid Tier 3 sanctions. However, media reports are encouraging, and Post is cautiously optimistic that the GOJ is preparing to take meaningful law enforcement action to combat TIP by raiding massage parlors. It is clear that, as Kingston Mayor McKenzie said to the press, the TIP Report has "jerked this country" at the highest levels, including the Prime Minister's office, which is very likely the invisible hand behind many of the recent positive developments about which we have been reading. End Comment.
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